

distributed job that was to be printed by the faulty printer includes the first page of all pages to undergo distributed printing, it is similarly determined whether the printer that printed the final page is of the type that ejects paper face-down. If the printer that printed the preceding pages is of the face-down ejection type ("YES" at step S73), then the distributed job (reprint job) for which printing failed is introduced to this printer at step S74 and control returns to step S56 in Fig. 5. The introduction of the distributed job in step S74 indicates an operation performed in accordance with information which specifies pages included in the spool file. More specifically, if the printer to which the distributed job is to be introduced ejects paper face-down, then the print data is transferred in the order of pages as stored in the ascending order in non-intermediate format, such as the RAW format. Whereas, if the printer to which the distributed job is to be introduced ejects paper face-up, then the print data is transferred in the opposite order of pages (within the range of pages) stored in the ascending order in the RAW format. Further, in a case where the spooled print data is stored in the descending order of pages, the transferring order in accordance with the paper ejection type is opposite to the order when the pages are stored in the ascending order.

Further, information concerning the configuration (paper ejection type) of a printer may be acquired from the printer each time or at a predetermined timing (polling), acquired from the printer as the printer spontaneously notifies an information processing apparatus of the information concerning the configuration periodically or upon occurrence of a predetermined event (trapping), or acquired by referring to information obtained from the printer or a printer server via a communication line at a predetermined timing under a control of a predetermined program, such as the control program (distributed printing program) of the present invention and a printer driver, installed in an information processing apparatus, and stored in the information processing apparatus.

On the other hand, if the printer that printed the preceding pages is not of the face-down ejection type, i.e., if the printer is of the face-up ejection type, or if the type of printer is unknown because it cannot be detected whether it is of the face-down ejection type ("NO" or "UNKNOWN" at step S73), control proceeds to step S75. Here the printer that printed the pages succeeding the distributed job that was to be printed by the printer that malfunctioned is specified and information concerning the configuration of this printer is acquired, whereby it is determined whether the printer that follows the faulty printer is of the type

that ejects paper face-up. In a case where a distributed job that was to be printed by the faulty printer includes the final page of all pages to undergo distributed printing, it is similarly determined whether

5 the printer that printed the first page is of the type that ejects paper face-up. If the printer that printed the succeeding pages is of the face-up ejection type ("YES" at step S75), then the distributed job (reprint job) for which printing failed is introduced to this

10 printer at step S76 and control returns to step S56 in Fig. 5. It should be noted that, in step S76, the similar transfer control as described for step S74 is executed.

Thus, if a printer ahead of the faulty printer is

15 of the face-down ejection type, this printer is caused to perform paper ejection. If a printer following the faulty printer is of the face-up ejection type, then this printer is caused to execute printing of the reprint job and paper ejection. As a result, even if a

20 certain printer develops a malfunction, the user need only collect, in regular order, the printouts ejected by the distributed printing system for which malfunction paper-ejection processing has been implemented. The collected pages will be in the proper order.

25 On the other hand, if the printer that printed the succeeding pages is not of the type that ejects paper face-up, or if the type of printer is unknown because it